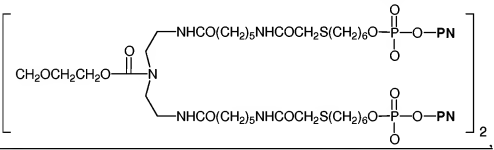
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in an individual, comprising administering to the individual an effective amount of an agent which reduces anti-dsDNA antibody in the individual, wherein the administration of the agent results in a sustained reduction of anti-dsDNA antibody for at least about one month, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 10% below baseline in the individual, ~~and~~ wherein the individual is human, and wherein if the agent is administered in the form of a conjugate of the formula



wherein PN is $(CA)_{10}$•$(TG)_{10}$ ((SEQ ID NO:2)•(SEQ ID NO:1)), and the administration of the conjugate comprises administering a dose of about 3 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 2 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a dsDNA epitope which specifically binds to an anti-dsDNA antibody from the individual.

Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 2, wherein the dsDNA epitope is a polynucleotide.

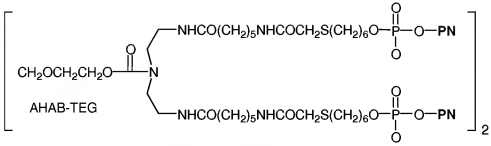
Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 3, wherein the polynucleotide is DNA.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a carrier and one or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and two or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

Claim 7 (withdrawn – currently amended): The method of claim 5 or claim 6, wherein said polynucleotides comprise the sequence ~~5'-GTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGT-3' (SEQ ID NO:1)~~ 5'-TGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTG-3' (SEQ ID NO:1) and its complement.

Claim 8 (withdrawn – currently amended): The method of claim [[7]] 5 or 6, wherein the platform molecule is



wherein PN is a [[the]] polynucleotide.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): The method of claim 7, wherein apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') for the polynucleotide with respect to the antibody from the individual before or upon initiation of treatment is less than or equal to about 0.8 mg IgG per ml.

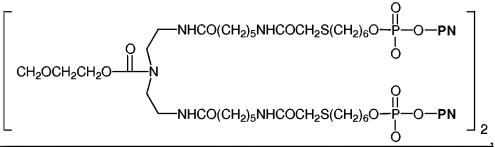
Claim 10 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 20% below baseline in the individual.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 30% below baseline in the individual.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about four months.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about one year.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A method of reducing risk of renal flare in an individual with systemic lupus erythematosus, comprising obtaining a sustained reduction of anti-dsDNA antibodies in the individual by administering an effective amount of an agent which reduces anti-dsDNA antibody in the individual, and maintaining sustained reduction of the anti-dsDNA antibodies for at least about one month, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 10% below baseline in the individual, ~~and~~ wherein the individual is human, and wherein if the agent is administered in the form of a conjugate of the formula



wherein PN is $(CA)_{10}$•$(TG)_{10}$ ((SEQ ID NO:2)•(SEQ ID NO:1)), and the administration of the conjugate comprises administering a dose of about 3 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 15 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the agent comprises a dsDNA epitope which specifically binds to an anti-dsDNA antibody from the individual.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 15, wherein the dsDNA epitope is a polynucleotide.

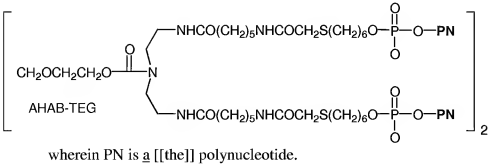
Claim 17 (original): The method of claim 16, wherein the polynucleotide is DNA.

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a carrier and one or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

Claim 19 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the agent comprises a conjugate comprising a non-immunogenic valency platform molecule and two or more double stranded DNA (dsDNA) epitopes, wherein the double stranded DNA epitopes are polynucleotides.

Claim 20 (withdrawn – currently amended): The method of claim 18 or claim 19, wherein said polynucleotide comprises the sequence ~~5' GTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGT 3'(SEQ ID NO:1)~~ 5'-TGTGTGTGTGTGTGTGTG-3' (SEQ ID NO:1) and its complement.

Claim 21 (withdrawn – currently amended): The method of claim 20, wherein the platform molecule is



wherein PN is a [[the]] polynucleotide.

Claim 22 (withdrawn): The method of claim 20, wherein apparent equilibrium dissociation constant (K_D') for the polynucleotide with respect to the antibody from the individual before or upon initiation of treatment is less than or equal to about 0.8 mg IgG per ml.

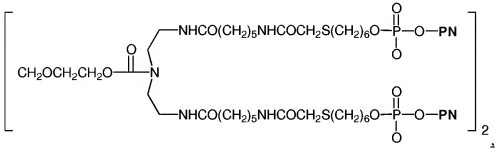
Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 20% below baseline in the individual.

Claim 24 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 30% below baseline in the individual.

Claim 25 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about four months.

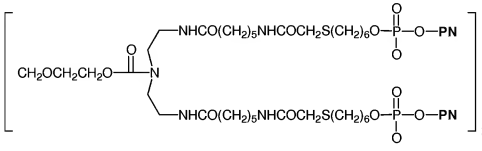
Claim 26 (original): The method of claim 14, wherein the sustained reduction is for at least about one year.

Claim 27 (new): A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in a human individual, comprising administering to the human individual an effective amount of an agent which reduces anti-dsDNA antibody in the individual, wherein the administration of the agent results in a sustained reduction of anti-dsDNA antibody for at least about one month, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 10% below baseline in the individual, wherein the agent is administered in the form of a conjugate of the formula



wherein PN is $(CA)_{10}$•$(TG)_{10}$ ((SEQ ID NO:2)•(SEQ ID NO:1)), and wherein the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 3 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 28 (new) A method of reducing risk of renal flare in a human individual with systemic lupus erythematosus, comprising obtaining a sustained reduction of anti-dsDNA antibodies in the individual by administering an effective amount of an agent which reduces anti-dsDNA antibody in the individual, and maintaining sustained reduction of the anti-dsDNA antibodies for at least about one month, wherein the sustained reduction is at least about 10% below baseline in the individual, wherein the agent is administered in the form of a conjugate of the formula



wherein PN is $(CA)_{10}$•$(TG)_{10}$ ((SEQ ID NO:2)•(SEQ ID NO:1)), and wherein the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 3 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 29 (new): The method of claim 1 or 14 wherein if the agent is administered in the form of the conjugate, the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 5 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 30 (new): The method of claim 1 or 14 wherein if the agent is administered in the form of the conjugate, the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 10 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 31 (new): The method of claim 27 wherein the agent is administered in the form of the conjugate and the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 5 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 32 (new): The method of claim 28 wherein the agent is administered in the form of the conjugate and the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 5 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 33 (new): The method of claim 27 wherein the agent is administered in the form of the conjugate and the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 10 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 34 (new): The method of claim 28 wherein the agent is administered in the form of the conjugate and the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 10 mg/kg or higher of the conjugate to the individual.

Claim 35 (new): The method of claims 1 or 14 wherein if the agent is administered to the individual, the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 200 mg to about 500 mg of the conjugate.

Claim 36 (new): The method of claim 27 wherein the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 200 mg to about 500 mg of the conjugate.

Claim 37 (new): The method of claim 28 wherein the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 200 mg to about 500 mg of the conjugate.

Claim 38 (new): The method of claims 1 or 14 wherein if the agent is administered to the individual, the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 300 mg of the conjugate.

Claim 39 (new): The method of claim 27 wherein the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 300 mg of the conjugate.

Claim 40 (new): The method of claim 28 wherein the administration of the agent comprises administering a dose of about 300 mg of the conjugate.

Claim 41 (new): The method of any one of claims 1, 14, 27 or 28 wherein the conjugate is administered repetitively.